

## Chapter 1 – Bundle of Blankets

“And now, we leave.”

Hermione’s eyes were empty. So many emotions were running through her mind, and she seemed to be fighting off the dizziness that suddenly consumed her. When she had asked (stated, she corrected herself) if he had killed Dumbledore, and he had said no, she thought that perhaps the whole ordeal could just blow off. That perhaps they could simply ignore Dumbledore’s plotting and go on with their daily lives.

She snorted. *What* daily lives?

She rested on the bed, putting an arm around her children and exhaled slowly.

“Not right now,” she said quietly. “We have to wait for Missus Dursley to reply. Until then, we’ve no choice but to stay here.”

He nodded, his mind slowly numbing. “Alright, I... I can do that...” He took out his wand and pointed it at a shrunken trunk. Since he was still in his Hogwarts uniform, and he was going to leave, he decided that it wouldn’t be too bad if he changed his attire. Muttering a spell, the trunk came back to original size.

He took out a pair of dark, slightly ripped jeans, a simple green long sleeve shirt, and his black hooded sweatshirt and left to change.

James started whimpering, saliva slowly making a trail down the side of his face. His hands were fisted, occasionally moving around as his small legs kicked wildly. He started shaking his head, his emerald eyes closing and his hair being fisted by his hands.

Hermione, having noticed this, quickly picked her son up, rocking him slowly. Seeing as he wasn’t calming down, she raised her shirt up and nursed him. He didn’t suck, so Hermione thought something else might be wrong. Not bothering with her shirt, she took his sweats off and checked his nappy. It was dirty and Hermione took her bag (the

one with all of the children's things—nappies, bottles, formulas, etc.) and took a clean nappy out along with a few wipes.

Once she finished she delicately put his sweats back on, rocking him back to sleep. She gave him a soft kiss on the forehead and gently put him back on the bed.

Harry came out with his old clothes bunched up in his arms, and gave Hermione a small smile, silently asking if she would fold them. Giving the clothes to Hermione, he gave her a soft kiss in thanks. He lay on the bed, pulling a sleeping Lily on his chest, tenderly running his thumb up and down her covered back.

"We shouldn't be like this," Hermione murmured a few minutes later. She was on her side, James in between Harry and her, her hand on James' small chest.

He nodded his head, slowly falling asleep. "I know," he whispered, turning his head so he could see his girlfriend and son. He brought his right hand out and ran his hand through James' soft black hair, wondering if he looked like that when he was an infant. *I'll never really know, will I?* he pondered, knowing that there were probably photographs of him when he was a child in Godric's Hollow. But it wasn't there anymore, merely a crater in the middle of nowhere.

He sighed, why was he thinking of this so suddenly?

"Where are we going to go?" Hermione asked quietly, her eyes closed.

He helplessly shrugged, still holding Lily, still drifting off to sleep. "Dursleys, Sirius—hopefully, and then we'll just... go with the flow."

She nodded, nearly asleep. Harry's breathing was evening out, slow, deep breaths while he clutched onto his daughter.

She gave a ghost of a smile, and she, too, fell asleep in the cold winter night.

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“Miss,” Dobby said softly, shaking Hermione’s shoulder. “Miss, Harry Potter’s owl is here...”

She mumbled in her sleep, shivering as she forgot to put a blanket on. (She had taken her jacket off sometime during the night and put it over James.) She slowly got up, her eyes fogged with sleep. After a few moments, she finally realised that it was Dobby who had awoken her, not Harry.

“Yes?” she asked, wondering why Dobby would want her at six thirty in the morning. “Is there anything wrong?” she wondered. “Did we forget to give you your pay?” Quickly, she made a move to get out of the bed, but Dobby stopped her, holding a frail hand up.

“No, Harry Potter’s Miss, nothing is wrong. Mister Harry Potter’s owl is here... and she looked sleepy just standing there with a letter on her leg,” the house-elf explained.

She nodded, making sure that James was secure (and Lily, for that matter) and then followed Dobby to Hedwig. At first, she wondered *how* Hedwig got in there, but then she let it go, reasoning that the castle of Hogwarts was just too mysterious for her tastes this early in the morning. Seeing the letter attached to her leg, she quickly untied it and went to get some owl treats. Once she gave a few to her, she gave her an affectionate stroke, and Hedwig left through the portrait.

“Thanks, Dobby, for telling me,” she said, looking around for a spare galleon or knut. Finding one under a clean nappy, she kneeled down and handed it to Dobby.

He shook his head fervently saying, “No, no! I will not accept Miss’s extra money! No!”

“Please, Dobby? You’ve been doing a wonderful job of taking care of the children, and I just thought you ought to have a bonus.” She offered him a genuine smile, and he still shook his head.

“No money, Harry Potter’s Miss.” Before Hermione could retort, someone else spoke up.

“How about socks, then?” asked Harry, holding both Lily and James in his arms. He walked over to Hermione and handed her Lily, and then looked back at Dobby. “So, what do you say? Socks, all right, then? If you refuse that, too, then you’ll have to take the galleon.”

Dobby nodded, softly saying, “Dobby accepts socks, then.” He looked up into Harry’s eyes, “If Harry Potter or his Miss doesn’t need anything, then Dobby will be going.”

They nodded, each giving him a small pat on the shoulder, and Dobby disappeared.

“Why did you get up so early?” Harry asked, stifling a yawn, placing James on his lap, resting his head on the chair behind him.

“There’s a letter,” Hermione answered, sleep quickly leaving her system. “I suspect it’s from your Aunt.”

He nodded and asked, “Where’s the letter?”

“Right here.” She pulled it out and handed it to Harry.

He read it aloud.

*Harry and Hermione,*

*Well, I certainly hadn’t expected for you to write me at this time, let alone ask for shelter. I... You two—four, I’m sorry, I keep on forgetting you two have children—can stay here; however, it will be a bit... crowded.*

*I’ve talked to Vernon, and after I explained things to him (I had to tell quiet a few lies so you two could stay), he said that you could stay for two weeks.*

*We will be there at King’s Cross, tomorrow (December seventeenth), at ten A.M.*

*Petunia Dursley*

*PS: Don’t reply. I don’t want the neighbours to suspect anything.*

Harry snorted, running a hand through his hair. “Wonderful, we have, what, four hours?”

“Not even,” Hermione murmured.

He checked his watch (he’d forgotten to take it off the night before), and saw that it was nearly seven o’ clock. Making a move to get up, he cradled James and stood up to go to their room. He took the shrunken trunks, cots, and everything else they’d need, and shoved them into his jean pocket. He took his wand and put it in his back pocket, and then put James on the bed, putting two pillows on either side of him. He then went to brush his teeth, skipping the shower as he took one the day before.

Hermione went into their room and put Lily on the bed, and she went to change. Since Harry was inside washing his teeth, Hermione was tempted to change in there, and perhaps get a little more out of it. (The potion hadn’t worn off fully, but it was slowly ebbing away. She still had the sudden urges to snog—or shag, if she wasn’t in her period—senseless.) But she decided against it, knowing that it’d delay them even further. They had to get to King’s Cross in three and a half hours, and the train ride itself was three hours, so they had to hurry.

Taking off her shirt, she grabbed a simple pair of jeans before she got pregnant, and tried to slip them on. They would barely go up her thighs. She sighed, forgetting that she’d gained roughly twenty kilograms (*forty pounds*) during her pregnancy. Even after the two were born, she’d only lost about seven kilograms (*fifteen pounds*)—and that was only because the twins weighed that much together. She roughly pulled them off, throwing them at the empty wardrobe. She groaned and walked into the bathroom, not caring if she didn’t have any pants on, or if her boyfriend was using the toilet.

He jumped in freight, slipping in the process. He moaned in pain, rubbing the back of his head, not caring if Hermione saw him exposed. He stood up slowly and looked at Hermione. “Do you need something?” he asked, putting himself back into his boxer shorts.

She smiled as she saw his member, but quickly recovered remembering why she was here. "Err... sort of," she replied. "How much do you weigh?" she asked, blushing slightly.

He seemed to think for a minute before shrugging his shoulders. "I don't know. The last time I've been to a doctor was when I was ten years old." His eyebrows knit in confusion. "Why?"

She blushed even brighter, "Because I need pants that fit me," she mumbled. "And I thought I *might* be able to fit into your clothes."

He shrugged, and pulled his pants back up. "Alright," he pulled out one of the trunks, "let's get a pair of my jeans for you, then."

Before he could un-shrink it, however, Hermione quickly put her hand up. "How about I just try the ones you're wearing right now? And if they fit, then we can take the trunk out."

He nodded, putting the trunk inside. He took them off, handing them to Hermione. "But what if they don't fit? And where are your jeans?" he wondered, not realizing what he just said.

"Are you calling me fat?" she questioned, her gaze intense.

His eyes widened, his question suddenly hitting impact. "No!" he replied immediately.

She nodded. "That's what I thought." She put one leg through, and then the other, getting angry as she found she wasn't able to even get them *up her thighs*. She screamed in frustration. "I can't fit into my clothes, and now I can't fit into yours?!" She irritably sat on the edge of the bath, silently fuming.

"Err... if- if they – err, don't fit then why don't you – err, enlarge your pants?" he stammered, hoping her reaction would be more peaceful.

Her ear perked up; why hadn't she thought of that? *I hate being in my period*, she thought. *I'm always too moody to think straight*. She stood up and put her arms around Harry, frightening him in the process. "Don't worry, I won't hurt you," she said as she planted her lips on his.

She smiled as he instantly responded, opening her lips with his tongue.

As they stood there, without pants, Harry thought, *If only she wasn't in her period. If only...* He brought his hands to the hem of her periwinkle sweater, and Hermione suddenly pulled away.

"We don't have long before we have to leave," she whispered. She gave him another heated (yet quick) kiss, and then left the bathroom.

He groaned, pulling his pants back on. Once he finished brushing his teeth, he went back outside, seeing Hermione (with pants on, thankfully) feed Lily.

She was stroking her soft brown hair, muttering, "Ten kilograms wouldn't be too bad. No, that'd bring be to about fifty-eight..."

Harry sighed. Why was she suddenly caught up with her weight? He thought women were *supposed* gain weight when they were pregnant. But she wasn't, not anymore at least.

"Hermione," he quietly said as he sat down next to her, picking up James in the process.

She didn't answer, just kept on muttering.

"Hermione, look, I don't care about your weight." She turned, giving him a sceptical look. "Really, I don't! I mean, yeah, you gained some weight, but that's because you were... you know. Aren't women supposed to gain some when they're... err... you know?"

Quietly, she murmured, "Yes."

"Then what's the big deal, Hermione? The twins aren't even three months old and you're suddenly worried about your weight?" He took her free hand into his. "What happened to the confident, I-don't-care-what-you-think-of-me Hermione?"

She turned her head and laid her head on her shoulder. "I don't know... my hormones are on overtime, with my period and after the

pregnancy. And then the stress, with Dumbledore, my parents, Kelsey, the potions, leaving... everything," she whispered miserably.

"Your parents?" he asked in mild surprise. What involvement did her parents have in this?

She nodded, switching the babies so she could nurse him. "Yes... remember what you said. That you should give them even a small chance? That, perhaps, we should visit them over the holidays?" She paused for a moment, "I think we could—should, I mean."

He gulped, nodding. "Okay..."

As James finished eating, Hermione quickly stood up and made sure everything was ready. Harry sat there, looking around, wondering if they'd ever come back to Hogwarts.

*Probably... Hopefully... Perhaps?* He wasn't too sure, but he did hope they'd have the opportunity to.

"Alright, we're ready. Let's hurry, we only have fifteen minutes to board," Hermione informed him, grabbing his hand and pulling him out of the room.

They quickly left the room, glad that no one was in Gryffindor Common Room. They walked through the corridors, ignoring the greetings they were receiving. They saw Draco walking, and he gave them an odd look.

"What ridiculous type of clothing is that?" he questioned, pointing at their muggle attire.

He rolled his eyes, "Muggle. Look, we don't have time to have casual talk. We're leaving, and we don't know if we'll be back. We just wanted to tell you that." He said all of this in a rush.

Draco blinked. "You're leaving..." He nodded slowly. "Alright, I can handle that."

"We have to leave now, Harry," Hermione urged, pulling his sleeve while putting James' cap on.



"We'll send you owls and stuff, alright?" Without waiting for an answer, they left.

"Bye," Draco muttered quietly.

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They weren't quite sure how they got last minute tickets to King's Cross (although Harry's name could've been a big benefactor), but they did. They boarded the train quickly, seeing others fill in the train, and they found an empty compartment. Sitting in it, Harry searched his pockets for James and Lily's muggle car seats.

He handed Lily over to Hermione, and said, "I need to get their car seats."

She nodded and readjusted the two in her arms. *Being a mother of two isn't as easy as it's cut out to be*, Hermione thought, seeing Lily pull the small deer on her sweater. James was snoozing in her arms, his small nose tinted pink, his small arms in fists above his head. Lily's emerald eyes sought out her own brown ones, and she smiled. Hermione grinned seeing her daughter smile, but then James (who was still asleep) kicked Lily, making her frown.

"Found them!" he said joyfully, putting the extra things away back into his pockets. He took his wand out and muttered, "*Engorgio*." The seats grew until they were their original size, and then Harry tenderly took James from her arms. He placed him into the seat, strapped him in, and gave him a gentle kiss, holding the seat securely.

Hermione did the same to Lily, and the rest of the train ride was quiet.

"Hermione, what are we going to do?" Harry asked after a few minutes. "We can't just stay at the Dursleys until we feel like leaving, and after that, we have nowhere else to live."

"Sirius," Hermione said simply.

He nodded, remembering. "I'll send him a letter when we get there." His eyes widened, "Oh, God, what about Hedwig?"

"I wager she'll be at the Dursleys before us," she answered nonchalantly.

"Probably," he agreed finally. *I wonder what will happen to the Tri-Wizard Tournament, Harry silently wondered. Will they continue? Probably,* Harry shook his head, clearing his mind of those thoughts. But then, new thoughts came rushing into his mind. *I wonder how they're going to take to the news that Dumbledore is dead, though. Most likely they'll be devastated. I just hope they won't realize Hermione and I have left...*

He sighed, putting the car seat on the floor and he lay down. "I'm going to take a quick kip," he muttered. He took his glasses off and put his arm over his eyes, and then he fell asleep.

All Hermione could do was roll her eyes and fix her jacket.

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Harry groaned and rolled to his side. He fell onto the cold floor, the air taken out of his lungs. "Oh bloody hell," he muttered, rubbing his forehead and chest.

"I guess it's a good thing I moved James, then," Hermione's soft voice said. "Wouldn't want to smother your child," she smiled.

"Yeah, yeah, good thing," he muttered absently, blindly searching for his glasses. Hermione rolled her eyes and handed them to him. "Thanks," he said and put them on.

"What time is it?" Hermione asked, cleaning some saliva from James' mouth.

"Nine forty-five," Harry answered, stretching his back out. He ran a hand through his hair, making his hair even messier. "We should be there shortly," he told her, trying to stifle a yawn.

She nodded, watching the snow falling gently outside. She took out her gloves and jacket, putting them on her lap so she could put them on in a few minutes. Harry, seeing this, did the same.

Finally, after what seemed to be seconds, but was really ten minutes, the train slowed down. Hermione made sure that the blankets on the twins would be enough for them, and when she was satisfied, she picked up the baby bag and one of the car seats, holding the compartment door open for Harry and James. He put his winter jacket and gloves on, picked up James' seat, and left.

"I wonder if Aunt Petunia is going to be there, too," Harry wondered, stepping down and searching for their familiar faces.

"Perhaps," Hermione answered. "It depends on how much space there is in the car. We are four people as it is, and if it's a five-passenger car, it's highly unlikely that she'll come. But, if it's a van—or something of the like—she might."

Harry nodded in agreement, still searching. He held her arm, leading them towards the exit. After a few minutes of blindly searching, Harry heard the familiar, "Potter!" He turned around, seeing Vernon a few yards away from them, glaring at them.

"Well, here we are," Harry muttered, walking towards him. Hermione took his covered hand, giving him a squeeze of reassurance, and they strode towards the large man.

"I thought you'd still be pregnant," Vernon commented in mild surprise, seeing the two faces peeking from layers of blankets inside two car seats.

She shook her head. "It's complicated," she said simply.

"Can we hurry up? I don't want my children to catch a cold," Harry spoke up finally, getting Vernon's attention once more.

"Shut up, Potter!" Vernon spat, his face quickly turning puce. "Let's go," he said gruffly, leading them to the car.

Once Harry and Hermione strapped the car seats in, they left to go to Surrey. Harry sat next to Vernon, and Hermione sat in between the two babies, but it felt like she was sitting in between two teenagers. One minute, James would be whimpering and Lily giggling, the next,

it'd be the exact opposite. She searched the bag for a bottle, and once she found one, neither would drink.

"I don't think they find the seats very comfortable," Harry commented turning around and taking the bag from her, looking for something else that would keep them occupied.

"They slept soundly on the train," Hermione retorted. "But now that they're in a car, they're being fussy." She sighed in frustration.

"If they vomit on my new leather seats--" Vernon started.

"I know, I know," Harry interrupted. "I'm going to pay for the damages. I know, I can easily pay, alright?"

"Boy, don't disrespect me." He wagged a sausage finger at Harry's face, "The only reason I brought you back was because I was being merciful. If it hadn't been for those two *brats* in the ca—" he was interrupted by Harry's deadly voice.

"*Don't call them brats,*" Harry hissed, his anger growing. "Don't you *dare* call my *children* brats!"

"Harry, he's just trying to get on your nerves. Don't let him get to you. This is exactly what he wants," Hermione tried to placate. "Please, Harry, just try to calm down."

"And you, you little—" Vernon started again.

"*Don't you dare,*" he growled. "Don't you *dare* call whatever it is you're going to say."

"Harry," Hermione tried again, "don't worry about it. It doesn't mean anything. Let him say what he wants to."

He growled and fisted his hair, tugging it.

Hermione sighed, resting her head on the back seat of the car. This was really getting to her. The excessive stress i.e. Dumbledore, his death, the babies, Harry's short temper, etc. She shut her eyes and forced herself to take calming breaths.

She didn't know how many breaths she took, but the next thing she heard was Harry's hand shaking her shoulder. "We're here, Hermione," he whispered, undoing the seatbelt from James' seat. After he was out, Harry held him close to his chest, putting a few blankets on top of his fragile body.

She moaned, wiping the sleep from her eyes, and saw that Harry already had James in his arms, and she had yet to get out of the car. Groaning, she did just as Harry did, holding Lily securely. The snow was still lightly falling, so Hermione put her hand over Lily's head, hoping that she wouldn't catch a cold. The sooner they got inside the better.

Harry was already at the front door, and he knocked. *I wonder where Uncle Vernon went*, Harry thought, absently rubbing the small of his son's back. Hermione joined him a few seconds later, teeth chattering, Lily in her arms.

Just a few seconds later, he was greeted by the face of Petunia Dursley. "Oh! Hurry, come in!" she exclaimed, opening the door farther so they could rush in.

He shook his head and stomped his feet to get rid of the excess snow while wiping off some snow from James' blanket. Hermione did the same, slipping her shoes off so she could get some feeling in them.

"Tea?" asked Petunia. "Coffee?"

"T-tea would be fine," Hermione replied, smiling softly.

"I'll have some too," Harry answered her, walking from the foyer and into the kitchen, "Thanks."

Petunia nodded and started the kettle.

Exiting the kitchen, Harry and Hermione made their way into the lounge. In there was someone Harry did *not* want to see.

His Aunt Marge.

"*You*," Harry said vehemently.

Marge turned around, her eyes nearly popping out of their sockets. “*Potter*,” she greeted, glaring at him. It was the only thing she could say to him at the moment. She saw a girl—*what was she holding?*—standing next to Potter, and then she noticed, he was holding something nearly the same size. Then, she noticed the small pile of black hair popping out from the blankets Harry was holding.

*Could it be a baby?* she wondered, shuddering at the thought. *Potter and procreation, it’s not something I want to think about just after breakfast.*

“So you’ve managed to get a bitch pregnant, have you now?” she asked standing up and walking towards Harry.

His response was simply holding his son tighter.

“Pity,” she continued, “not even fifteen and you’ve managed to have one—no, I’m sorry, *two*—children. How pitiful.” She smirked as she saw his eyes flair up.

“Shut up,” he said quietly, deadily.

“Harry,” Hermione reprimanded softly. “Don’t say anything, please. She’s just trying to egg you on. You’re walking on eggshells as it is, please don’t ruin it. We’ve nowhere else to go at the moment,” she told him softly.

“Oh? Is that so?” She asked, her gaze turning to Hermione. “Nowhere else to go? What has Potter done this time? Murder someone else and you’re running away from the authorities?” She shook her head at her. “I should’ve expected this from Potter and his *whore*.”

Harry’s anger was flaring, and he looked ready to shout, but Petunia swiftly interrupted.

“Marge! Have some tea!” she urged, escorting her to the kitchen.

“But I—”

“Oh, please Marge,” Petunia interrupted again. “I tried a new recipe and I wanted to test it out. Raspberry with a *hint* of lemon and

blueberry,” she smiled, turning around for a brief moment. Catching Hermione’s attention (Harry was still giving the television a death glare—a spot where Marge was previously standing), she gave her a wink.

“Blueberry?” asked Marge. “Why blueberry?”

Hermione went and walked over to Harry, preparing herself to scold him once more.

“I don’t want to hear it right now,” he muttered before stomping upstairs.

Even though it had been only ten minutes, he *hated* his holiday already.

## Chapter 2 – Witches and Wizards

*You can't do anything about the length of your life, but you can do something about its width and depth."*

**Evan Esar (1899 – 1995)**

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December 17th...

Holding on to his son, Harry stomped upstairs, ignoring his girlfriend's look of worry. He noticed the stair he had broken earlier in the year, was now fixed. Noticing the little thing, he gave a soft smile, kissing the top of James' head. He walked the rest of the way, not expecting Dudley up there with Vernon.

They were whispering in hushed tones, and Harry was tempted to listen into their tête-à-tête, but refrained from it. Hermione, as always, was right. They were walking on eggshells, and angering Vernon—or Dudley, for that matter—could deprive Harry and his family of shelter.

He saw Dudley peer over his father's large shoulder and see the bundle of blankets Harry was carrying. Dudley smirked at him, seeing James' head. He stood up and started walking towards him, his smirk (which was quickly turning into a grin) still intact.

Harry was very tempted to simply ignore the large boy and enter his bedroom, away from his dreadful relatives. However, Dudley had already made his way towards Harry and held his arms out. Upon instinct, Harry held his son closer, glaring at the larger boy. He frowned, going to his full height and slightly puffing out his chest. (Although Harry and Dudley were the same height—one hundred sixty seven centimetres—*five six*—he was still at least ten kilograms heavier than Harry's fifty kilogram weight.)

"Fine," he muttered, glaring daggers at Harry. "If you want to be stingy about your children, be that way. I don't care. I'm only their *Uncle*, after all."



Harry shook his head fervently, one of his hands going to the doorknob on his bedroom door. "No, Dudley. See, that's where you're wrong. You might be my cousin, but to my children, you'll never be their Uncle."

He opened the door and, without waiting for Dudley's retort, stormed inside. There was nothing different about the place, save the thick layer of dust over everything. He noticed that his bed was still untouched, and everything else was left open and empty. Giving a sigh, Harry welcomed his temporary home. *At least it's better than the cupboard*, he thought, somewhat happily.

Sitting on the dusty bed, Harry thought about cleaning the room up a little. But, how would he clean it? Shrugging, he sat on the bed, finally taking a look at his son. His eyes were wide open, and he gazed at Harry with a wide toothless smile, his hands waving around frantically. He smiled lovingly at him before running his fingers through James' hair. It was quiet obvious that his hair was passed down from his father, not only from the colour and texture (which, he noted, was really soft), but also by the disorderliness.

"What are we going to do, little guy?" he asked, absently playing with his son. James giggled and wrapped his fingers around Harry's index one, bringing to his mouth. Understanding what he wanted, Harry brought James to his chest. Standing up, he went to open the door, but someone already beat him to it.

Hermione and Aunt Petunia came into the room, both holding something. Hermione was holding Lily and the baby bag, making a move to sit on the bed. His Aunt Petunia was holding a tray of food, giving them both soft smiles.

Hermione sat on the bed, ignoring the dust, and lifted her shirt up. Lily instantly latched onto her breast, sucking hungrily, having been deprived of food for hours. "Harry," she said quietly, "can you give me James? I bet he's very hungry."

He nodded and gave Hermione James. He was used to seeing her feed the children, and so when he saw her now, he simply gave her a kiss (the potion hadn't completely worn out, so he lingered for a bit longer) and turned back to Aunt Petunia.

"I've made a hot lunch," she informed them quietly, placing the tray of food onto the studying desk. "If you need anything, don't hesitate to tell me, alright?"

Hermione nodded, "Alright."

"Oh!" Harry exclaimed, taking the shrunken trunks from his jeans. "Can you un-shrink these?" he asked. "We're not old enough to do magic, and I can't do anything until I figure out a spell to take the tracking charm off."

She nodded, taking out her wand from her apron. Harry put the trunks on the floor, and he saw his Aunt mutter a spell, and the trunks sprang back to original size. Giving her a true smile, he said, "Thank you."

She nodded, casting a mild heating spell on the food. "No problem." She looked around the room, giving an odd look as she did so. She sighed, remembering that she hadn't cleaned Harry's room since... ever. Pointing her wand at the room, she muttered a simple cleaning spell and the room righted itself. Dust instantly disappearing, the cracked window righting it, and the old cobwebs from years vanishing. She gave a self-satisfied smile, knowing that the room was as clean as it would ever be.

"Thanks," Hermione said, laying James onto the old bed. Next, she put Lily on the other side of her, giving them each a kiss on the forehead as they dozed off into sleep.

Nodding, Petunia left, leaving Harry to unpack while Hermione adjusted herself. He opened the trunk and looked around the room. The walls were bare, the desk untouched, and his wardrobe was empty. Knowing that this was going to be his—*their*, he mentally corrected himself—shelter for the next few weeks, he debated whether or not he should take the stuff out. He didn't care too much, so he simply haphazardly threw some of his trousers into there, his shirts soon joining them.

Hermione rolled her eyes, putting a pillow around James and Lily for safety, and got up. She sat on the chair and started on her lunch, blissfully ignoring her boyfriend's unpacking.

Once Harry was finished unpacking (or, as Hermione liked to think of it, throwing), he sat on the floor with a plate full of his lunch. They ate in silence, often simply gazing at the wall or one of their children.

Finally, after a few minutes, Hermione broke the silence. "What happened in Dumbledore's office?" she asked quietly, picking up a chip and munching on it.

He hadn't expected that question, and so when she did, he nearly choked on his chicken. "Why do you ask that?"

She merely shrugged, finishing her chips off and now moving on to her chicken. "I was simply wondering."

He nodded feebly, silently chewing on the chicken. He didn't know whether or not to tell her. Part of him wanted to, but the other didn't. He didn't want her to know, mainly because he wanted to forget it himself, but another part of him wanted to let her know, so she'd know just what happened.

Finally, in the end, he decided to let her know. "I... At first, he seemed very... odd. I hadn't paid too much attention to it, but he was acting strangely." He paused to look at her, and he saw she was paying full attention. "It was almost as if he knew he was going to die," he said softly, staring at James' small figure. "He started saying that he was jealous, about how I wasn't able to handle it and—" he broke off, shaking his head fervently. "And then... then he said that he knew all along, that it took him a while, but he caught on. That I was furious with him, that I had the urge to hurt—even kill—him." The next words were but a mere whisper: "And then he killed himself. Just like that, without batting an eyelash." He chuckled humourlessly, "But before he did so, he showed me a potion, one where if he drank it, it would disintegrate his form." He closed his eyes, "And he died... Nothing, expect a stupid letter, saying how he 'went away,' or something like that."

Once he finished, he saw that Hermione had tears in her eyes, begging to fall. He tore his eyes from her, ashamed for himself. *Why did I do that? Why did I tell her? Why couldn't I have just kept my anger in check? Why?* he questioned himself silently, standing up and looking out the window.

She stood up and went next to him, putting her hand on his shoulder. "Oh Harry... that was horrible," she whispered, wrapping her arms around his waist. Following her steps, he wrapped his arms around her shoulders.

There was a knock on the door, followed by a loud, "Potter! Come out here, now!"

Rolling his eyes, Harry extricated himself of his place in Hermione's arms. He shouted at the door, "Alright, Uncle Vernon! You can move yourself from the door, now!" Once he heard the grunt of his Uncle, Harry grinned and walked out of the door.

Once he was outside, he heard Dudley's sneer of, "Have a nice shag?" and Vernon's glare upon him. Muttering a few foul words to his large cousin, he walked over to him.

"You'll be coming to dinner with us," Vernon said, his voice showing obvious distaste. "Petunia said that a few of the neighbours have seen you four entering the house, so if they see us going to dinner without you, they'll be suspicious."

Nodding doubtfully, Harry said, "Alright. But how are we going to fit everyone in? Just my family takes the whole car, so we have no room for anyone else."

Vernon's face turned into an evil smirk. "That's where your scrawniness comes in handy, Potter." At Harry's raised eyebrow in confusion, Vernon proceeded to explain. "Your *girlfriend*, Dudley, and Petunia will be sitting in the backseat of the car, while Marge and I will be sitting in the front. Since you are so skinny, you'll be sitting on the floor." He smiled as he saw Harry's horrified look.

"You have got to be raging bloody mad!" he exclaimed. "I am *not* going to let my children into a car without the proper safety! I will *not* risk my children's lives!" He crossed his arms over himself. "There is no way you're getting us in there."

Vernon rolled his eyes. "You're going, and that's that." His voice was final, and that was the end of their conversation. Turning around, smiling triumphantly, he went and descended the stairs.

Fuming, he stormed into the bedroom and gave a low growl of anger. Hermione jumped, knocking the pillow on to Lily's face in the process. She started crying, and so Hermione picked her up, patting her back and murmuring to her before her cries got loud enough for James.

"What happened?" she asked.

He shook his head, running a hand through his unruly hair. Walking by the trunk, he started rummaging through it for a spare piece of parchment, ink, and a quill. Finding only parchment, Harry settled it on the desk and looked around for a spare pen in the desk. Finding one, he started writing a letter to Sirius.

After a few minutes, he reread the letter.

*Snuffles,*

*Dumbledore is dead. I'm sure it'll be in the Prophet tomorrow, but I needed to let you know. I know what you're thinking: that I killed him. But, I didn't. He killed himself, knowing that I couldn't "handle" it. (There's another thing he thinks I couldn't handle.)*

*I'm sure that the Ministry will be in on this in a few days, questioning me. (I'll be the first person everyone suspects, I reckon. I am Harry Potter, after all.)*

*Right now we're—me, Hermione, and the kids—are at my Uncle's. We're going to stay here for about a week, and then I guess we'll go to yours. (I sort of want to pay a visit to the Granger's, but I'm not too sure Hermione would like that.)*

*Well, that's about it... Owl me back,*

*Harry*

Seemingly satisfied with the letter, Harry called out, "Hedwig!"

"She's not here, Harry," Hermione said automatically, softly running her hand up and down Lily's stomach. "I think she's still at Hogwarts."

He sighed, laying the letter onto the desk. "I thought she'd be here already."

"I did too," said Hermione. "But, apparently we've been proved wrong."

Changing the subject, Harry stated, "Uncle Vernon said we've got to go to dinner with him."

Blinking at the sudden topic change, Hermione said, "Oh... really? And why is that?"

"Because he just wants to throw me off my rocker," Harry muttered.

Hermione chose not to comment on that.

"I told him that we're not going. Well, that the babies aren't going, at least. And we can't leave them home alone, so that means I won't be going. And I doubt you'd want to go there by yourself." He kept on going, pacing around the room, but Hermione wasn't paying attention.

A few soft raps were sounded from the other side of the door. "Harry?" sounded the voice of Petunia. "Can I come in?"

Harry nodded, but then remembered that he couldn't hear him nod. "Yeah," he said, lying down on the bed and pulling James to his chest.

She came in, moving the trunk away before standing in front of Harry and Hermione. "Vernon told me that you won't be going to dinner."

Harry nodded, absently running his hand up and down his son's small back. "Yeah, and we won't be. There won't be any car seats for the twins, and that makes it dangerous whilst on the road. And I am not going to endanger their lives for the sake of food."

"He's got a point, Missus Dursley," Hermione commented, glancing her way.

She gave a soft sigh. "I knew it'd end up like this," she murmured. "I told Vernon to buy the new car, but he just wouldn't listen to me." She stood up, "Alright, if that is your final decision. I'll make something for

you before we leave. How does grilled aubergine and a jacket potato sound?"

"Scrummy," said Hermione, closing her eyes and lying back onto the pillow.

"I'll bring it up in a few hours, then," she said and walked out of the door.

Hermione nodded, knowing that no one was paying attention. Craning her head slightly, she saw that Harry was already asleep, his grip strong on James. Closing her eyes, she too let herself drift into sleep.

**0—0—0—0**

Marge walked into the Lounge and sat next to Dudley, who was watching the telly. There was some comedic show on, but Marge paid no attention. She was lost in thought.

She knew that there was something odd about Petunia, but she didn't know what. Her 'freak' of a sister was gone, and so she wasn't too sure if she had rubbed off on her. Perhaps she did, she wasn't too sure she wanted to know. And then today, when the brats had arrived, she'd treated them as if they were family, instead of worthless scum. She wondered why so.

She heard talking in the kitchen, and so she decided to snoop. Walking towards it, she instantly found out that Vernon and Petunia were arguing.

"Take pity upon the children!" she heard her say.

Vernon grunted (or so she assumed it was him). "Why should I take pity upon two parents who are barley teenagers?"

She heard a loud sigh. "Because they are barely teenagers, Vernon! They aren't even old enough in the Mug—normal world! They can't even do anything! And, Vernon, look at it from their point of view. They're two lost parents who have nowhere to go. They have no choice but to go to his Uncle's home!"

*What's a Mug world?* Marge absently wondered, still listening in on the argument.

He grunted again, and said, "Petunia, I have taken enough pity upon Potter for thirteen years. You don't need to cook for three extra people—four, now that Marge is here."

"But it doesn't—" she started, but he interrupted.

"Yes it does, Petunia! Don't you see? I bet he killed someone from that freak magical school of his! I bet he did something, and so now he's running away from the authorities."

Marge could practically *hear* his sneer.

"I am not going to take mercy on him and his family. I don't care if he has children—they're probably... *magical*," he said with distaste, "just as he and his witch of a girlfriend are!"

Marge screamed, her instinct consuming her. Potter was *magical*? His girlfriend was a *witch*? They could do *magic*?

Petunia and Vernon, both instantly forgetting their heated quarrel, rushed from the kitchen to see Marge lying on the floor, unconscious.

**0—0—0—0**

Harry awoke to the sound of screaming, and he instantly sat up (holding his son close to his chest) and brandished his wand. Seeing that there was no one in front of him—although he did hear a rather loud thud from the bottom floor—Harry stood up and started shaking Hermione's shoulder gently.

"Hermione," he said, "wake up. Something's going on downstairs."

Mumbling nonsense, Hermione groggily got up. "What happened?" she asked, yawning.

"Pick up Lily and meet me downstairs," commanded Harry before leaving the room, leaving a confused Hermione behind.



Harry ran downstairs, holding James securely and nearly tripped when he saw the still form of Marge, her family members surrounding her. She looked a bit pale, and her mouth was opened into an 'o.'

Petunia was getting a wet washcloth, dabbing her forehead with it. Vernon stood there, wondering what to do. And Dudley was in the Lounge. In a matter of moments, Hermione and Lily were by his side.

"What happened?" asked Hermione, looking at her form.

"She screamed and then passe—" started Petunia, but was cut off by the shrill voice of Marge.

"*You two!*" she shrieked, pointing a finger at Harry and Hermione. "*You two are... are freaks! Abnormal, magical freaks, the lot of you!!*" she cried, struggling to stand up.

Harry and Hermione stood there, their faces lost in confusion. How had she figured it out? They hadn't done any magic, so there was no possible way that she could figure it out. By this time, the twins had started their own cries, their t-shirts quickly soaking. Harry quickly started patting James' back, rocking the small infant close to his chest, swaying him side to side, hoping he'd calm down. Hermione followed his actions, but Lily's cries hadn't subsided.

"Keep it down, you brats!" shouted Dudley from the Lounge, angry that he couldn't hear his favourite show anymore. "Some of us are trying to watch the telly!"

*You're the only one*, Harry thought angrily, still trying to soothe his son. After a few minutes, James and Lily had finally quieted down, and were now dozing off.

"You lot—witches and warlocks, or whatever—are abnormal," said Marge, her voice quieter, deadlier. "You don't deserve to be in our high class society. You don't belong in our *world*."

Harry scoffed, deciding it best if he let her little statement about warlocks go unnoticed. "High class society? Let me tell you something—"

"No," she interrupted, "Let me tell *you* something. If you two are what you say you are, then you have no reason to stay in this house."

"Now Marge," said Petunia, "they've already unpacked. What's the rush? They may stay here for as long as they wish. Isn't that right, Vernon?" she asked, giving a fierce glare towards Vernon.

*It's about time she was assertive*, thought Harry, looking between husband and wife.

Finally, after a few moments, Vernon acquiesced. "It's not a problem." Muttering something about the loo, Vernon quickly made a hasty exit.

"Potter's cast voodoo over Vernon, he has," Marge muttered before retiring to the Lounge.

Sighing a breath of relief, Petunia turned to the young family. Instantly, Hermione asked, "How did she know?"

"She must've heard our quarrel," answered Petunia, leading them up the steps. Knowing that the two would need further explaining, she did just that. "Vernon was arguing that we shouldn't have kept you, that you two are magical so you don't deserve to be here." She sighed, continuing, "I told him to take pity, that you two are barely teenagers, and that you have no where to go. But... he just wouldn't listen to me." She opened the door to their room and continued explaining. "And, I'm assuming that Marge overheard the part where he called you a Wizard and Hermione a Witch."

Harry nodded, setting James onto the bed. "I guess..."

Hermione sat on the bed, Lily lying comfortably on her lap, and she said, "There's no other way, is there? I mean, there had to have been a way that Marge had figured it out. Harry and I haven't used magic since Hogwarts, and we don't plan on doing magic until we get the tracking charms off of our wands."

Petunia nodded thoughtfully.

"Petunia!" sounded Vernon's booming voice, "We're leaving for dinner in an hour, I suggest you start getting ready!!"

Rolling her eyes, Petunia opened the bedroom door. "Dinner will be up in an hour. If you need anything, just tell me." At their nods, she gave them a small smile, and left.

"Once Hedwig comes, we should probably send the letter to Sirius," said Harry, taking his socks off and lying down next to James. "I mean, we can't stay here forever, and Sirius' place sounds the best."

She nodded. "Yeah, we already have our own rooms there," she paused. "But, where des he live?" she questioned herself.

"Grimmauld Place," he stated, remembering the address from before. "Oh – you mean *where* Grimmauld is, don't you?" He shrugged, "No idea."

She nodded and stood up, cradling Lily as she did so, and went to the window. "Harry, how far is the library from here?"

*Trust Hermione to ask where the library is*, thought Harry, shaking his head. "Err... It should be about ten minutes walking distance from here. Why?"

"Because I was thinking that we could look up Grimmauld," she said, still looking out the window.

He nodded, "I guess that'd work. But do you know how to work a computer?"

Nodding, she said, "Yes, when I was in Primary School, they taught me how to use a Muggle computer. I'm not an expert at it—Oh Harry, don't look at me like that!—but I know how to use it."

"So we're going to use the internet to find Sirius?" he asked, shrugging his jacket off and getting his hooded sweatshirt from the wardrobe. "Can't we just wait until we ask where he lives?"

"You're so lazy," Hermione muttered, placing Lily on the bed and sitting next to her, placing her hand lightly on her stomach. Lily made a soft gurgling sound, drool going down the side of her face. Giving a soft chuckle, Hermione took the baby bag and took out a piece of cloth, wiping the offending drool.

"Thanks for the compliment," Harry said, grinning as he, too, sat on the bed next to James.

Changing the subject, Hermione asked, "What about Draco?"

"What about Draco...?" he questioned slowly.

"We just told him 'bye' and left!" she exclaimed, looking at Harry. "You can't expect us to do anything without simply leaving him behind?"

"Where are you going with this?"

"I mean," she said exasperated, "that he could give us information! About what's happening at Hogwarts!"

"Oh..." Harry shrugged, resting his head against the wall. "Sure, I guess. Just remember, though, the Ministry is going to be asking for questions, and we're probably on the top of their list."

"Why would we be at the top?" she asked.

"Because of Snape," he stated knowingly. "Remember the first night we talked to Draco? He said that he'd overheard Snape and Dumbledore talking about 'some' potion. It's obvious they're going to question all of the Professors—and when Snape's turn arrives; my name is going to be the first thing that comes out of his mouth."

"Yes, I remember," she said remembering. "But why would the Ministry track mail?"

"To see if anyone knows of our whereabouts," he answered immediately. "I mean, I'm not entirely sure that they'll even notice we're gone—"

"Of course they'll notice, Harry!" Hermione interrupted. "You're *Harry Potter*, the *Fourth* Tri-Wizard Champion! I'm surprised if they hadn't already noticed!"

Harry chuckled, setting his glasses on the side table. "They probably think we've been shagging all day."

Hermione blushed and put her head down, her bushy hair covering her face. "We were close to it," she mumbled, playing with the hem of her jumper.

"But it's a good thing we didn't," he added, picking James up and playing with him now. "Otherwise another Potter would be on its way in a few months time."

"True."

And that was the end of their conversation. It was a peaceful silence, with each knowing that they needn't speak words to keep themselves entertained. Harry sat there with James in his lap, James occasionally gurgling and losing balance of his head (which took Harry a few 'bobs' to notice and finally put his hand behind his head), and Harry chuckling and playing with his son's unruly hair and poking his stomach gently, making him smile widely. Hermione, with Lily sleeping peacefully, took out a book and started reading from where she left off; making sure that one of her hands was securing her infant daughter.

Before they even knew it, Petunia had come inside the bedroom, carrying a tray similar to the one they had earlier in the day. Their supper was on the plate, and Harry's senses were immediately filled with the scrumptious smells.

It wasn't as if Harry never had good food from the Dursleys; he just never got much. If he would do some 'freaky' thing, he'd often get barely enough to satisfy his small stomach. It had gone on until he was nearly eleven, the near starvation, but the good food that just made him ache for more. He thought of it as a torturous thing.

"We're leaving right now," Petunia said, putting the tray onto the studying desk. "We should be back in a few hours," she stated.

Hermione nodded, and Harry said, "Okay. Thanks, Aunt Petunia."

She nodded and left the room.

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Hours later, Petunia made her way towards the Lounge. The dinner hadn't gone well. Most of the time, Vernon, Dudley, and Marge were degrading Harry and his family while they would scarf down their food. She didn't know how the woman could eat so much! Hadn't she learned of fruits and vegetables and healthy food? Everything Marge had ordered tonight was simply sugar, salt, and food that had much too much calorie content.

Pushing the thoughts from her head, she made her way towards the kitchen, feeling the need to make sure everything was in order before she retired to her room.

Noticing a paper on the cooker, Petunia looked at it, confused. She'd only subscribed to the *Daily Prophet*, but she'd already gotten hers in the morning. *I wonder why it's here, then.*

Picking it up, her eyes went wide.

